area on the Anamallais for some years to come, negotiations are proceeding with the Planters' Association with a view to come to some settlement which will make this road scheme feasible. If a satisfactory settlement is arrived at, it is proposed to start the construction of this road next year and finish it within three years.

Trade of the Port.

10. In view of our great financial interest in the harbour, Honourable Members would be interested to know something about the progress of the trade of the port. The total number of steam ships that have entered the port during the 3 years ending with 1936—37 is on an average about 770 ships per year. The total export from the port averages about 1,37,000 tons. The total imports during 1934—35 were 6,70,000 tons and in 1935—36 it rose up to 7,29,000 tons. In 1936—37, the imports fell down to 6,03,000 tons. The fall in the import tonnage during this year need not however cause serious alarm as it was almost entirely due to the drop in the import of grains due to the rice market having been in an over-stocked position in the previous year. The customs revenue collected in 1934—35 was over Rs. 54 lakhs, and in 1935—36, over Rs. 55,81,000. The receipts under the Landing and Shipping dues averages about Rs. 8 lakhs per year. It will thus be seen that the volume of trade in the port has remained fairly steady during the last 3 years notwithstanding certain adverse factors. It can be confidently expected that with the provision of greater facilities, the trade would expand considerably.

11. One other matter connected with the customs revenue would be of interest to Honourable Members. Our share of the customs revenue has hitherto been paid to us by the Government of India only after the final accounts of the Government of India for a financial year are closed. Though the financial year of the Government of India ends on the 31st March we used to get our share of the customs revenue only in September and sometimes even later. We made a request to the Government of India that approximately 90 per cent of our share may be paid to us as soon as the preliminary figures are available to the Government and that the balance may be paid when the final accounts of the year are closed. The Government of India have very kindly agreed to this proposal. The net result of this transaction will be that we would gain about Rs. 15,000 to Rs. 20,000 yer year by way of interest charges.

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